

**Lucien's
Chronicles
Tale of the Erudite**



2018 Manpaint

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Previous book:
Lucien's Chronicles - A Quantification



Prologue

Year 28 of Slyph.

The Lord of Knowledge finally came. "I am returned." Ste said. "Good to see you back!" Lucien replied. "Want to visit this new world?". Ste was looking around him. Lucien's television was open, two men were having a debate. "So, do you think they deserve a death penalty?" the animator said. "No, of course not! they need medical attention." the other men said. "Those who still have faith in democracy obviously have mental problems." he said in a normal tone. "This world did indeed change a lot." Ste already knew that democracy had been abolished since a while, but he couldn't help but deplore this world. He may still have the body of a teenager, but he was above all mortals when it comes to knowledge, literally.

Ste and Lucien were walking in the enlightened city of Upirkly, both with black raincoats. The city was enlightened by neon blue lights, they felt as if they were in a science-fiction movie. "Now that you know everything... may I ask you something?". As an immortal, Lucien knew many things, but he couldn't resist to ask something. "How much taxpayers money went into these lights?" Lucien asked. "You don't want to know." Ste said. They were passing in front of one of Architech's technological store and Ste stopped. He was contemplating the world his brother created. "How can people trust a mobile phone company that much?" Ste asked Lucien. He had no answer but had the very same opinion as him. People have blind faith in the last democratically-elected president, Bill Rwright. Some probably worshipped him as a god. "Do you plan to change this world?" Lucien said. "It is too late for that" Ste replied.

As they were approaching a cinema, a woman behind a counter told her to come, saying there was a problem. "Young man, your identity could not be fetched using the visual recognition system, please contact Architech immediately to fix this is issue" she said. Lucien showed the woman a card, proving he was an executive of Architech. "Don't worry, I will sort that out tomorrow" Lucien falsely said. Ste was of course not in the databases. He sacrificed 14 years of his own life in exchange of Akashic knowledge, naturally he wasn't there. Once back at Lucien's place, they sat down. "Tell me, what do you plan to do?" the immortal asked. "To solve a problem, you first need to understand the causes" he replied. "I am going back, where everything started". It was not possible to

change the past of an existing timeline, but it was possible to create a temporal duplicate, and that was his plan.

Chapter I

Ignorance

Year 23 of Slyph, timeline Q73

Ignorants. They are willfully ignorant and even sometimes take pride in it. Perhaps it was because I almost didn't get a normal education due to my Arismatic condition, but I think knowledge is power. Yet everyone around me just doesn't care. Everyone is so stupid. Perhaps my "mental disorder" allow me to perceive the world differently, but still. These students don't respect each other's, they put entertainment above all else. My name is Stefan Hallow and I seek to get out of this hell of blissful ignorance. My wish was answered, well kind of. One day I was reading an elven novel called Magi Hunters when someone knocked at my door. After opening the door (I was home alone that day), I saw two governmental agents. After proving their identity, they ordered me to follow them. I didn't know what they were here for but, as far I know I did not commit any crime. They also didn't look like policemen, more like security guards. As far as I could tell, they were both vampires. They had a black van which I needed to go inside. I asked where we were going, but they just answered, "We cannot tell you, sir". Once inside there was two teenagers inside; a vampire girl with a gothic style and an elven boy that looked like the average nerd. During the ride we socialized a bit. Niklas liked reading elven novel like me but Laryas preferred classical and historical literature. After a few hours we started to really wonder where the van was. There were no windows inside the van, only two seat each side. No one knew why we were taken away. After approximately two more hours the van finally stopped. As the agents were opening the door, I could see multiple vans around us, each one were unloading people. They were of all kind; politicians, scientist, teenagers, children, etcetera . It was hard to estimate the amount, but I would say at least a thousand. I was questioning where we were as the landscape was unknown to me. As our group was being escorted somewhere, Niklas noticed that we were in a place called Sulvania Valley. My fears skyrocketed. It was a place in the Sulvania Region where rich people where building underground bunkers. Meanwhile a helicopter arrived. It was carrying the president of Upirkly, Stephen Rwright. A mysterious man wearing black clothes was accompanying him, but I couldn't tell who he was. We were directed to a dome-like structure. Once in, we had to take an elevator which was taking us deep below. I noticed an inscription saying

'CONCLAVE-01' on the wall and wondered what its meaning was. As few minutes later, we were on a floor where people were having discussion in group scattered across the very large room. We then heard a distant but loud explosion sound that came from the surface. We later learned that every nuclear arsenal on Dymunia has been detonated due to what they called an "ultra-solar flare" but they didn't give us more details. The bunker was also apparently called Heptalia. I supposed that the name had a religious background as the number seven is considered holy by many religions. The structure also had seven floors. Five of them were habitable and the remaining two were for agriculture and cattle. We lived in small apartments, usually with an assigned roommate. Mine was a man called Lucien. This man was very knowledgeable, he told me a lot of things. One day I asked why I was chosen. Most of them were occupying high and respected functions in society. Whereas they were scientist, doctors or similar, I was just a random student. Lucien told me that it was because I was Arismatic and that we were systematically repressed for a reason. "What is the reason?" I asked. "Because they feared them but rejoice, they are no more." he replied. Despite asking who he was talking about, he refused to tell me, saying that he it was a long story. I moved on and eventually forgot about it.

Chapter II

Heptalia

Year 28 of Slyph, timeline Q73

Over the years, science made a lot of progress despite the exile of the mortals under the ground. We eventually developed a new technology that we called "Simulcast". I will not dive into the details, but it is basically a headset that allow us to have full control over our dream aswell as memory transferring. As a result, everything changed. Children do not learn anymore they, download. Every practical memory is shared in what we call The Collective. The Collective is pretty much the equivalent of the Internet but with memories. Heptalians can upload and tag their memories. We also live in what could only be called absolute democracy. Those seeking to run for the "Imperator" (government) position have to immerse themselves in a 1-year political simulation. The result of the simulation is then required to be downloaded for those who wish to participate in politics. Voting ballot of course don't exist, we pull the votes from their memories directly. Those who would have labelled as criminal now get intensive memorial rehabilitation. Every action taken by judges, politicians and others are systematically uploaded into The Collective for all to know. There is also what we call a Joint Simulation. They are basically multiplayer's dreams. A server on a computer compute the data from multiples memories and treat it as if it was a game. Those experiences are awesome! Unlike in the old world, games are not limited by technical restriction, only the bounds of the imaginations of the mortals. Some people job is to look at images all day while their memories are being extracted. My favorite simulation is probably the Magi Hunters one. Based on the elven novel and conceived directly by the author, it allows you to explore its wonderful world. While raiding against a Magi boss, I saw again Niklas again for the first time since The Cataclysm. We played for hours until he had to leave. We were during the Halloviah period in December, so we had a few weeks off due to the annual tradition. As I was resting in a virtual inn, I contemplated how pleasant this world had become. Despite all the destruction and pain, our society managed to rise from its ashes. Our world became a utopia. At least in my opinion. I liked this the fictive universe of Magi Hunters because of its historical foundation. Hundred of people had being executed in the actual middle ages for "witch crafting". Myths and legends described famous historical figures as magicians. I could name a few: Faust, Grindevlad, Rukiro, St-Lucien,

the list goes on. I of course, don't believe in magic for obvious reasons but I think myths are interesting regardless.

Chapter III

Excavation

The Halloviah period this year was great. While some preferred to celebrate in their simulations, many were partying in reality. Floor 3 is where most festivities took place. During the Halloviah's eve I saw Laryas and invited her to my table. We had a nice chit-chat and I learned that she became a grimdark-themed simulation designer. Later that night, she took me to her apartment. We spent the night remaining in her simulation. She was creating a replica of the medieval Upirkly. As far as I could tell, it was pretty accurate. It was what the humans usually described as a dark gothic architecture. We eventually fell asleep in a vampiric castle.

Once the holiday over, I volunteered to participate in the surface expeditions. Our goal was to find relics of the old world to catalogue knowledge once back. We had special equipment to protect ourselves from the contaminated air. Once up above the surface we were dispatched in team. We had quads and obviously excavations tools. Our team was tasked to find what remained of the Humblewood mansion. The structure dated back to the period of Pnyre, thus making it very old. Due to the possibility of having historical documents, we decided to excavate the site. There was a ton of books in a ragged state. This made me sad and made me realize that a lot had been lost in The Cataclysm. I did find however an interesting relic. It was a book called *The Art of Magick*. Some of the page had been ripped apart but some were still visible:

THE LEGEND OF FAUST

(Added by Enri Payne)

At the night of the Hallows, the two men would fight to death, both seeking knowledge. Having pactised with The Engineer and his rival with The Architect, he boldly challenged the so-called Saint. After seven hours, he with the green eyes, was entraved down below. He who had the red oculi defeated the legendary magi using only Magick.

The notes were clearly more recent than the book itself but it was clearly a translation. I put the book in a plastic bag and I started get back to the rest of my team. The sky was becoming cloudy grey. The rain had become acid due to the

fallout of The Cataclysm. We couldn't be harmed with our suits, it was more about preserving the relics. As I was on my way, I noticed a person wearing black waterproof clothes along with a gas mask. It was clearly not an Heptalian. "Hello?" I said. He was staring at me. As he was approaching me, I noticed that he had a golden ring. An Heptralyia () was engraved on it. It was the symbol used by the Helliosian to represent their god. "We will meet later " the mysterious individual replied. He handed me an ancient but intact book before quickly walking in the opposite direction. "Wait!" I shouted, but he didn't even glance back. The book he gave me was strange. It was clearly old but didn't showed any sign of time; the pages weren't even faded a little bit. It was as it would have been recently written. The text was written in an archaic language and symbols. The only recognizable element was the symbol of the Archalyia (). The symbol representing The Architect.

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Chapter IV

Artefacts

As we went back to the base of Heptalia, a group were classifying the artefacts found. I saw that mister Lucien apparently joined the preservation effort. I showed him what I found. Once I showed him the mysterious book, he was astounded. "Where did you find it?" he asked. I told him what happened. Once my story finished, Lucien took out his smartphone. "I am scanning it, we can't get to lose such knowledge again..." he said. He clearly had an idea of what was inside and found it valuable. When I asked about the nature of the tome, he simply replied "Not here, where all could hear".

Once back to our apartment, I downloaded some knowledge. I was looking at religious mythology in particular. I learnt that apparently at the beginning of all, Hellios and The Architect fought. The first fighting for freedom and the second for control. Who won depends on the religion but that particular fight is depicted in all of them. In Dymunia, all (mainstream) religions are polytheist; it's a pantheon. If you had faith in one of them, you acknowledged the other divinities. I was an atheist, but I could relate to Helliosian values. Their main goal was seeking knowledge to enrich themselves. These days, religion is not so much popular. My guess would be because that the knowledge of the atrocities committed by Ecclesia are now widespread. Ecclesia was basically an alliance between churches. In medieval time, they proceeded of purge atheists from the surface of Dymunia. The information was controlled and redacted for unknown purposes. This period in history is now referred as The Dark Age. Once the headset removed, I noticed that Lucien was searching something. He did not want to tell me his function in the old world, but he was forewarned of The Cataclysm before it happened for sure. He had all sort of old stuff. After a few minutes he found an old but radiant golden ring. It was nearly identical to that individual's ring. The only difference was that the symbol of The Architect was instead of the one for Hellios. Lucien looked at it with nostalgia. "Now that we are alone, what was that book?" I asked. "If I remember correctly, it's the original version of The Codex". My eyes went big. The Codex of the Architect was essentially the holy book of Architectism. It was a known fact that during Ecclesian times, the book got major revisions. "Tell me Stefan, do you wish to know the truth about me?" he asked. I nodded. He told me that this might change my perspective of the world forever. Eager of knowledge, I accepted of course.

Lucien then proceeded to upload some of his memories on an SD card. I then started the memorial simulation.

Chapter V

Memories

[Lucien's memories]

The sky was grey. The monks were waiting for he who is blessed to arrives. An old man in a red vestment entered the court along with the cardinals. His name was Alexender Jovklai. "Brothers, times are changing..." he started. "Magic is now no longer in our world... the gods chastised us". The monks were slowly looking at each other, as if they were feeling they were at fault. "This world... need to be purged..." he said, elevating his voice. "The Holy Prophet was right, magic was a curse, not a blessing!". Those who chose to become monks commit to the saint engagement, which was to never use magic no matter what. "Will we let those Magi spoil this world?" father Jovklai said. "Will we condone those sins?". The brothers made their disapproval know. This is here everything started. Enri Payne stood among the monks in silence. He could have easily killed him, but he had other projects. Villages were burnt. People were crucified. History was rewritten. But he had a plan to preserve knowledge. Brother Payne was a scribe, so he made copies a lot of important texts. He knew the world was entering a dark era. Once his underground library sealed, Enri Payne vanished...

Once I removed the headset, I was looking at Lucien astonished by such revelations. It was not possible to edit a memory. Isolation was possible (hence the creation of simulations) but the mortal brain was too complex for editing. "So, you were the legendary monk Saint-Lucien?" I asked. "Indeed, I am an immortal". He sure didn't look like one as anyone would think he would be about thirty. "How did you become immortal?" I asked. "I was curse by Hellios... because he sealed The Architect within my soul". He said. I was scared. The gods were real. I felt some sort of presence just by evoking that thought. "They are always watching but they don't care much" he declared. "What happened after death?" I asked. "It is like an idyllic dream, there is no such thing as Heaven or Hell" he replied. This information was fascinating and reassuring. I was sitting right next to a man who witnessed the rise and fall of Ecclesia and even met the gods. "Why did you hide the truth? " I asked. "That's because it would only create only conflicts..." I nodded, releasing the truth would only create fear. "I believe we have reached the climax of mortalkind" he said. "And now I am quite bored". I looked at the time on my rudimentary Aphone 1, it was

getting late. We went to bed because tomorrow would be a big day. We were going to participate in a larger scale excavation.

Chapter VI

Collapse

Our team entered the ruined city. As I was navigating, I found the building of the Sulvanian Archives. Once inside, I was looking at anything that could be useful to our cause. The archives were located underground, so it is likely that some documents survived. This place was dangerous however, the floor or ground could collapse at any instant. Lucien accompanied me. Lucien was examining what I assume were the remains of the reception while I was checking the state of the stairs. We suddenly heard something big falling outside. The upper floors were collapsing. A large debris fell in the center of the room, separating us. "Lucien!" I shouted. The floor started collapsing, I grabbed a metal spindle. The floor was gone, I was there suspended above the pit. "Lucien!" I shouted again in desperation. No response. The spindle broke and I fell down into the pit. I closed my eyes, knowing I would probably never open them again.

I found myself floating in what could only be described as a starless space. I wondered if I was dead. Lucien then suddenly appeared near me. "Am I dead?" I asked. "That depends of you" he said. I had relaxed feeling. As if nothing mattered anymore. Blue phantomic images started to appear. "There exists a world for each choice every individual makes... " he started. "We call them timelines". Some of the images were showing what I assumed to be dictatorships and marching armies. "Our world may be at peace, but war, destruction and ignorance are still rampant in other temporalities. I looked at the images with horrification. "We were the lucky one" Lucien concluded. He was of course not referring to The Cataclysm but rather what came after. "I am going to leave this timeline" he said. Your body is not in a utilizable state, if you want, I can offer you my body". "Your body?!" I asked in incomprehension. "Using magic, I will transfer your soul into my body, you will have access to all my memories, but you will still have free will" he revealed. I asked how he would use magic since it vanished eons ago. "Something happened, I suspect it was the Lord of Knowledge's doing". "Make your choice, we don't have much time left" he warned. "But remember, immortality is a curse, not a gift, though I can release your soul anytime you want". I accepted his proposition. It was that or dying anyway, I was not ready to die that that young. I opened my eyes and saw my old body crushed by the floor debris through Lucien's eyes. "Thanks, Lucien" I said mentally. Once I escaped the building, I knew what I had to do. I was going

to bring Simulcast technology into other timelines to change everything. This wonderful invention will be used to bring peace in all temporalities.

Chapter VII

Sunset

I exited building in a way that no one saw me. They probably assumed we were both dead, and it was better like this. I was walking in the direction of an old cathedral. I knew (or rather Lucien knew) that it was there that I would be able to quit this temporality. After a few hours of walk and detours I finally reached it. The sun was setting as I arrived at the site of the ruined cathedral. On some walls, it was still possible to see Helliosian iconography. The same mysterious black-clothed man than earlier was waiting still in the center. "So, you made your choice Lucien... or rather Stefan Hallow". He knew. "Yes, I want to salvage the other temporalities" I replied. "Then follow my steps". We went down in what I assume was a basement. There was an ancient door with the symbol of The Architect on it. The frame was in carved stone and the main part in some sort of wood. "What is your name, sir?" I asked. "Call me Ste". As Ste's touched the door, the wooden part disappeared, and a very bright light emanated from nothingness. As I stepped inside, I knew I was leaving heaven for hell.

[Timeline E57]

Once my eyes open, I noticed that I was inside a mansion. Whoever owned it was very rich. The Stefan Hallow of this timeline was waiting in one of the corners of the room. I and Ste removed our protection equipment. To my surprise the man with the mask was Stephen Rwright. "Mister president?" I said in exclamation. "I am not president in this timeline, I was not even present" he replied. I, Stefan, Lucien and Ste sat around a table and started talking. The place had a warm feeling to it, like if it was a sanctuary that protected from the "corruption" of the world. The Lucien of this timeline told us how he defeated Aleister Payne. My version in this timeline was colder than I was. Likely because he had to constantly protect himself from the omnipresent technology. The thing that surprised the most was the whereabouts of Bill Rwright. In my timeline he was a young entrepreneur who died in a car crash. In this one he was a loved dictator that liked trees. Stephen proceeded to tell his story. In his teenager hood, he had a girlfriend named Ellia Iswyl. Said girlfriend got beaten by three random dudes with basketball bats because she was ginger-haired. There was an obviously false myth that those who were ginger had a lower intelligence. The elf succumbed of her head injury. Hellios apparently

manifested in front of Stephen to offer him to make a pact. "If you give up your ability to have emotions and 14 year of your life, you will know all." Hellios said. Stephen Rwright then passed 14 years in the Akashic records in a place called Ailliah or something. I was a bit lost during this part. "People stopped to think critically" concluded Ste. It was impossible to change the present, but we could apparently create another and different past. We all agreed to create a time where Simulcast technology would be available earlier to save this world.

END

To be continued...